

In the Claims:

Please amend Claims 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of transferring at least two sheets, which are arranged in a shingled mode of arrangement in a sheet transport direction, to a sheet handling machine in which the at least two sheets are moved at a first speed after the transfer, a first and a second sheet of the at least two sheets being spaced by a certain length of displacement in the sheet transport direction, the method comprising the following steps:

(a) supplying the at least two sheets (200, 202) in the shingled mode of arrangement to the sheet handling machine at a second speed, the second speed being higher than the first speed; and

(b) decelerating the second sheet (202) to a third speed as soon as the first sheet (200) is decelerated to the first speed in the sheet handling machine, the third speed being lower than the second speed, thereby maintaining a shingled arrangement of the at least two sheets.

2. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein [an] a leading edge of the first sheet [which is the leading edge] in the sheet transport direction and [an] a leading edge of the second sheet which is the leading edge in the sheet transport direction are displaced relative to one another by the length of displacement, the first sheet being decelerated at the [front]leading edge thereof and the second sheet being decelerated at [the an rear edge [constituting the rear edge] in the sheet transport direction.

3. (Currently Amended) A method according to [one of the] claim[s] 1 [to 2], the method comprising the following steps:

(c) advancing the at least two sheets in the sheet handling machine by a distance which is determined by the sheet format and the length of displacement; and

(d) repeating steps (a) to (c) for an additional pair of sheets arranged in a shingled mode of arrangement in the sheet transport direction.

4. (Original) A method according to claim 3, wherein the additional pair of sheets is deposited in the sheet handling machine shingled in an ascending or descending mode.

5. (Currently Amended) A method according to [one of the] claim[s] 1 [to 4], wherein the first speed is 0.25 m/s, the second speed is 3 m/s, and the third speed is 2 m/s.

6. (Currently Amended) A method according to [one of the] claim[s] 1 [to 5], wherein the third speed is equal to the first speed.

7. (Currently Amended) A device for transferring at least two sheets, which are arranged in a shingled mode of arrangement in a sheet transport direction, to a sheet handling machine which comprises a first transport unit which moves the at least two sheets at a first speed after the transfer, a first and a second sheet of the at least two sheets being spaced by a certain length of displacement in the sheet transport direction, the device comprising:

a feed roll which feeds the at least two sheets in the shingled mode of arrangement to the sheet handling machine at a second speed, the second speed being higher than the first speed; and

a brake roll which decelerates the second sheet to a third speed as soon as the first sheet is decelerated by the transport unit, the third speed being lower than the second speed, thereby maintaining a shingled arrangement of the at least two sheets.

8. (Previously Amended) A device according to claim 7, wherein the transport unit comprises a first shingle roll which engages the edge of the first sheet constituting the leading edge in the sheet transport direction, and wherein, as soon as the shingle roll has engaged the first sheet, the brake roll engages the edge of the second sheet constituting the trailing edge in the sheet transport direction.

9. (Currently Amended) A device according to claim 7[or 8], wherein the transport unit comprises a substantially continuously driven conveying belt and a plurality of shingle rolls which are pretensioned towards the conveying belt and which are spaced apart in the sheet transport direction by a distance determined by the sheet format and the sheet displacement.

10. (Currently Amended) A device according to [one of the] claim[s] 7 [to 9] comprising a trap, which is arranged between the feed roll and the first shingle roll, the trap causing descending shingles of sheets in a first position and ascending shingles of sheets in a second position.

11. (Previously Amended) A device according to claim 10, wherein the brake roll is associated with a first sheet path along which the at least two sheets travel when the trap is at the first position, an additional brake roll being provided, which is associated with a second sheet path along which the at least two sheets travel when the trap is at the second position.

12. (Currently Amended) A device according to [one of the]claim[s] 7[to 11], wherein the sheet handling machine comprises:

a second transport unit, which is arranged after the first transport unit in the sheet transport direction, the first transport unit collecting the sheets continuously and transferring them to the second transport unit, when a predetermined number of sheets is arranged in the first transport unit, the sheets in the second transport unit being arranged in a shingled mode of arrangement in a sheet transport direction in such a way that the leading edges of the sheets in the sheet transport direction are spaced apart by a certain length of displacement, the second transport unit moving the sheets in a clocked mode in such a way that the sheets are displaced by a predetermined distance in the sheet transport direction, the distance depending on the number of sheets to be distributed and on the sheet displacement; and

a distributing unit which, when the sheets move in the transport unit, discharges from the sheet handling machine the respective leading sheet in the sheet transport direction.

13. (Currently Amended) A device according to [one of the]claim[s] 7[to 11], wherein the paper handling machine comprises:

a second transport unit which is arranged such that it extends parallel to the first transport unit ,

a deflection means which is arranged in front of the first and second transport units when seen in the sheet transport direction and which conducts sheets to the first transport unit when occupying a first position and sheets to the second transport unit when occupying a second position, the deflection means switching over from the first to the second position, when a predetermined number of sheets has been received in the respective transport unit, and

a distributing unit arranged after the first and second transport unit when seen in the sheet transport direction,

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wherein the transport unit having no sheets supplied thereto moves the sheets in a clocked mode in such a way that the sheets are displaced by a predetermined distance in the sheet transport direction, the distance depending on the number of sheets to be distributed and on the sheet displacement;

wherein, when the sheets are being moved, the distributing unit discharges from the paper handling machine the respective leading sheet in the sheet transport direction.

14. (Currently Amended) A device according to claim 12[or 13], wherein the second transport unit comprises a conveying belt and a plurality of transport rolls which are pretensioned towards the conveying belt and which are spaced apart in the sheet transport direction by a distance determined by the sheet displacement and by the sheet format.

15. (Currently Amended) A device according to [one of the]claim[s] 12[to 14], wherein the distributing unit includes a counter which detects the number of sheets distributed.

16. (Currently Amended) A device according to [one of the]claim[s] 7[to 15], wherein the third speed is equal to the first speed.
